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## Job crafting: who and where?

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Job Crafting: Who and Where?

Mia Myers

Departmental Honors Thesis

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Management

Examination Date: March 25, 2020

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## **ABSTRACT**

Job crafting, a type of employee-initiated job design concerned with job tasks, relationships, and mindsets about the job, is a relatively new concept that workplaces should be looking into. Job crafting has implications for how work is conducted and in what fashion, but little research has examined what external and internal factors could influence an individual's inclination to job craft. Using a qualitative and quantitative approach, this study examines the possible relationships among task crafting, relational crafting, organizational culture, affect, and emotional stability. This study finds that organizational culture, affect, and emotional stability do impact how much an employee feels empowered to task craft and relational craft. The findings provide insights to what employers and employees should take notice of when considering how to facilitate job crafting and thus contributes to the general knowledge of job crafting.

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## Introduction

According to a Gallup poll from 2018, only 34% of employees are actively engaged in their jobs (Harter, 2018). Although this number is reportedly on the rise, there is still a significant portion of the American workforce that is not committed to and enthusiastic about their work. Why is it important to have engaged employees? The degree to which an employee is engaged with a job can predict feelings of job satisfaction, intention to quit, and organizational commitment, all of which can significantly impact a work environment when shared by a number of employees (Saks, 2006). A popular way to create and keep engaged employees is by allowing employees to job craft (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting is important because of its relationship to outcomes such as employee engagement (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2013) and job satisfaction (Saks, 2006).

Job crafting is defined as “the actions employees take to shape, mold, and redefine their jobs” (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). More specifically, employees can proactively and purposefully redesign the attributes of their jobs, namely in the tasks, social aspects, and mentality surrounding the job. Job crafting incorporates three independent aspects of a job that can be malleable: the specific job tasks and duties, social relationships curated whilst performing the job, and mindset of the individual performing a job (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting can impact important work-related outcomes including increased feelings of achievement, enjoyment, and meaning in one’s work, along with the fulfillment of one’s identity (Berg et al., 2013). Increased levels of achievement, enjoyment, and meaning compounded with tenure in a position can positively increase employee engagement in a workforce (Berg et al., 2013). Utilizing job crafting in a job can be a creative and impactful way for employees to modify their job in a significant way.

There is a significant link between receiving support from management and positively engaging in job crafting (Berg, Dutton, & Wrzesniewski, 2007). Management's input, specifically in receiving support from management and giving autonomy, can significantly affect how comfortable one feels in liberally changing the relational or task-specific aspects of jobs (Saks, 2006), but current research has not yet looked into how an organization's own culture, the mutually shared values and beliefs among employees that influence how a company conducts business (Lee, Raschke, & Louis, 2016), may impact an employee's tendency to craft beyond managerial input. Organizational culture is a significant contributor to organizational value and can make employees feel accomplished with their work (Lee et al., 2016). Wanting to feel accomplished with their work and with their job is a critical component of why people engage in job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). With this in mind, the current research will examine how the culture that surrounds employees influences the act of job crafting.

A second under-researched area of job crafting is the role of an individual's personality in work. Personality is how someone perceives him or herself and affects how social settings, such as the workplace, are understood (Schneider & Smith, 2004). Because people's views of themselves are often skewed, personality is a difficult aspect to objectively examine. There has been research surrounding personality and organizational behavior, but an area gaining interest involves how personality can influence job design, especially employee-initiated job design such as job crafting (Schneider & Smith, 2004). Connections have been made between aspects like the Big 5 personality characteristics, proactive personality, and general self-efficacy to job crafting (Rudolph, Katz, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). Not well understood though is how workplace culture and personality jointly influence a person's crafting tendencies. This research will examine how personality, specifically emotional stability and affect, influences job crafting.

More specifically, I attempt to find if there are similarities in people's positive and negative affect, emotional stability, and work environments to shed light on how these aspects may influence an individual's proclivity to craft. Affect is included in this research because positive affect has associations with how employees complete tasks that may be outside their job description and how they overall view their job duties (Searle & Parker, 2013). Negative affect has an association with counterproductive behaviors and may influence how employees view their jobs as well (Searle & Parker, 2013). People with negative affect can be more anxious at work and can react negatively to work challenges, which could influence how their job is viewed (Searle & Parker, 2013). Emotional stability can influence stress tolerance and how comfortable people feel in their jobs (Schneider & Smith, 2004); emotional stability may have a relationship with job crafting and how empowered employees feel while crafting.

In summary, this paper contributes to the knowledge surrounding job crafting and the specific individual differences that lead to engaging in crafting by exploring the current literature surrounding crafting and investigating how workplace organizational culture, affectivity, and emotional stability may contribute to employees' tendencies to craft.

## **Literature Review**

### **Job Crafting**

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) assert that job crafting is composed of three different groups: task job crafting, relational job crafting, and cognitive job crafting. Task job crafting involves changing the scope or dimension of tasks in a job. This can be seen as taking on more responsibilities or tasks, spending less time performing a specific task or tasks, or shaping the nature of a task to better suit the individual (Berg et al., 2013). Through emphasizing or redesigning tasks already within the domain of a specific job, job crafters can add meaningfulness to their jobs without significantly changing their job duties. Task job crafting is the most literal of the three crafting types as individuals can actively change duties of their jobs in this way.

Relational job crafting is concerned with the touchpoints and people surrounding a job, such as a client load or coworker interactions. In general, building, reframing, or adapting relationships are concrete examples of this type of job crafting (Berg et al., 2013). Relational crafting is most simply seen in changing existing social networks within a workplace, such as a person in one department interacting with someone outside of that department where there is no business necessity to interact with or no existing interaction channels. An increase in relational efforts could possibly be seen in businesses by cooperative efforts with different teams or one-on-one partnerships between two departments, as these actions alter existing relationships within jobs and create social networking opportunities.

Cognitive job crafting is about changing the perspective from which a jobholder views his or her job. Unlike the two other forms discussed, cognitive job crafting cannot be manifested



into changed relationships or tasks; it is within a job-holder's mind that this type occurs.

Common expressions of this type of job crafting is seen in expanding, focusing, or linking perceptions (Berg et al., 2013). Expanding perceptions is when employees "cultivate meaningfulness by broadening their perceptions of the impact or purpose of their jobs in mind" (Berg et al., 2013). Berg et al. (2013) cite an example of expanding perceptions from the job of a movie ticket salesperson: instead of seeing his or her job as merely selling tickets, seeing his or her job as providing entertainment to customers. Focusing perceptions is the opposite, where employees narrow their perception of their job to specific tasks that bring them meaningfulness, and linking perceptions is where employees draw mental connections between their job tasks and personal interests (Berg et al., 2013). An example of focusing perceptions could be that an ice cream scooper who finds enjoyment from interacting with customers and not from scooping ice cream focuses on the meaningfulness derived from the interactions in order to bear the less tolerable parts of the job.

Job crafting may also have negative consequences. Because job crafting often involves an individual's drive to change aspects of the job into something more meaningful or interesting for oneself, the end result may be more detrimental to the organization than helpful. For example, an employee who decides to no longer take customer calls in a help center would be very problematic in meeting a company's customer service and sales objectives. It is therefore important that managers guide job crafters in order to benefit the organization while also promoting a crafter's own interests. Regardless of the consequences resulting from crafting, an employee's decision to craft may speak to his or her personality and perceived opportunity to craft.

The relationship between an employee and manager becomes critical at this point, as support from management is a crucial implement to initiating crafting (Saks, 2006). Employees who trust in their organization and their supervisor are more inclined to show cooperative behavior, organizational citizenship behaviors, organizational commitment, and loyalty (Zhang, Tsui, Song, Li, & Jia, 2008). Employees with jobs that are closely monitored by their supervisors are less likely to engage in job crafting because of the high visibility of the crafting attempts (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Similarly, employees with more interdependent tasks are restricted in task crafting as any changes they make are closely bound to others' tasks (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Zhang et al. (2008) state, "Supervisors' actions and behaviors, which are essential in determining the subordinates' attitudes, provide the foundation for trust" (p. 115). As trust is a motivational foundation for crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), companies that want to take advantage of job crafting should look into the supervisor-employee relationship and its implications for crafting.

Moreover, the idea of job crafting is cyclical. Crafters continually change aspects of their jobs to fit organizational demands and personal preferences, making job crafting a never-ending cycle of assessing needs and readjusting a job to fit those needs. As an organization changes with time, employees also change. In order for an organization to have a competitive advantage, organizations will have to tap into how tools such as job crafting can fill gaps in their business. The cyclical nature of job crafting gives employers ample opportunity to recognize opportunities and gaps in roles and work proactively with employees to fulfill those job roles. With a cooperative effort between the organization and employees, job crafting can be a tool to both keep an employee engaged and fulfill necessary roles in an organization. Since both managers and employees operate within the overall social structure of the organization, the prevailing

cultural norms and expectations of a company culture are likely to influence the degree to which a person engages in job crafting.

## **Organizational Culture**

One of the main influences of job crafting that this study will be looking at is organizational culture. Organizational culture can be described as “the complex set of values, norms, and symbols that define the way in which a firm conducts business” (Lee et al., 2016). Alvesson (1992) explains that culture, in general, has a two-fold purpose: it is a control mechanism that regulates behavior in societies and an evolutionary device used to cultivate roles over time. Within an organization, it is the shared knowledge among employees regarding how one should think and behave (Brief, 2002) Organizational culture acts as an employee control mechanism by creating a “norm” of behaviors that people can relate with and act in accordance to (Alvesson, 1992). People want to belong in an organization, and by knowing what behaviors are accepted or not accepted, people can act within those boundaries to find a sense of belonging (Alvesson, 1992). For example, a company that has a culture of safety regulation would not find reckless and dangerous behaviors acceptable, so employees in that company would understand that they are not to act in such a way.

Despite the idiosyncratic nature of organizational culture, researchers have attempted to document some of the prevailing features common within organizations. The Competing Values Framework (CVF) by Lee et al. (2016) attempts to document some of these common features. In general, there are four categories that reflect widespread cultural features: team, innovative, competitive, and bureaucratic (Lee et al., 2016). Team culture revolves around a company having a flexible structure and a focus on its people. An innovative culture has a flexible

structure with an external focus on adapting and growing with the market. A competitive culture has a controlled structure and an external focus on their competition and serving its clients. Bureaucratic cultures also have a controlled structure but focus on rules and regulations (Lee et al., 2016). This framework, called the competing values framework (CVF) gives a simplistic view on two sets of competing values, stability/flexibility and internal/external focus, that an organization can take. While this framework is basic in its model, many researchers use this model to examine culture in their primary research.

The CVF category an organization falls into can give insight into what an organization values and what motivates its employees. For example, a team culture fosters more collaboration and trust than the other three cultures, and the innovation culture focuses on adaptability and growth through risk-taking and discovery (Lee et al., 2016). It can be surmised that the team culture puts more worth in team endeavors, whilst the innovation culture puts worth on the individual through monitoring employees' flexibility and self-growth measures. Using these assumptions, employee motivations could be extrapolated based on their culture type.

According to the Person-Organization fit literature (Westerman & Cyr, 2004), people are drawn to certain organizations and their cultures because the culture and values of the organization match with the person's values and personality (Lee et al., 2016). Because team cultures place value on its people and versatility through creating morale and team spirit, companies with this type of culture could have a heavier concentration of employees who utilize teamwork and collaboration (Lee et al., 2016). Because of the heavy socialization associated with team cultures through HR initiatives in team spirit and morale boosting, there might be a relationship between team cultures and relational crafting. In the same way, innovative cultures could have employees who are motivated by individual incentives, risk-taking, and rewards (Lee

et al., 2016), which possibly could have a relationship with task crafting in order for employees perform to their strengths. Competitive cultures, which emphasize an external focus on serving clients, may encourage employees to utilize task crafting to get the bottom dollar by altering how they do their job tasks. Bureaucratic cultures are known for their emphasis on regulations; those cultures could have employees who exhibit a lack of task crafting in favor of upholding the company's established rules.

Tapping into what an organization's employees are motivated by can give managers specific insight into how to make a more productive and satisfied workforce. Additionally, cultures can influence the effect that motivational levers have on employees, such as compensation, sense of accomplishment, and equity (Lee et al., 2016). For instance, companies that have an innovative culture may influence how employees respond to senses of accomplishment or rewards. By using job crafting and studying its implications, managers can see how their employees motivate themselves and how they can help their employees with the process. This study will be asking employees questions regarding organizational culture to determine where the culture falls on the CVF and how its culture can influence an employee's crafting.

## **Personality**

In addition to organization culture, personality characteristics can also influence behavior at work and in social settings. The decision to engage in job crafting is not likely driven solely by the social context of work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Individual behavior is influenced by both situational elements and individual characteristics of a person (Schneider & Smith, 2004). As stated previously, personality is a set of characteristics and behaviors that form an

individual's character (Schneider & Smith, 2004). Because personality often guides decision-making and social interactions by deciding how we curate our social behavior and environments that we interact in, personality is a critical area to investigate when considering job crafting (Schneider & Smith, 2004). Personality is important to consider in this regard because jobs and work environments are primarily where people interact and spend their time. Additionally, future behavior is often driven by past behavior, so to predict future behavior, one must look into personality and the decisions that people make daily (Schneider & Smith, 2004). The curating effect of social behavior found in personality compounded with the regulating effect of organizational culture can influence behavior to a great degree (Alvesson, 1992). By understanding relevant personality traits along with organizational culture, it becomes clearer how people of a particular workforce operate in relation to the completion of their jobs using job crafting techniques.

### **Emotional stability**

A critical component of personality can be described with the Big Five: Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism/Emotional Stability, Openness to Experiences, and Extraversion. One of the more influential predictors of job performance within the Big Five is emotional stability (Schneider & Smith, 2004). High emotional stability is linked often with tolerance of stress and positive affect (Johnson, Rogers, Stewart, & David, 2017), which can be advantageous for engaging in stress-inducing events such as altering job tasks or other job crafting practices. Furthermore, high emotional stability has a relationship with lower levels of burnout and stress and higher job satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2017). Low emotional stability has a relationship with anxiety and instability (Johnson et al., 2017). Emotional stability differs from affect in that emotional stability, when cultivated, can positively impact how people react to

change and other stressful events (Schneider & Smith, 2004). Because of emotional stability's implications for change management and job crafting, it is being monitored in this study.

Emotional stability is likely to influence job crafting because of its relationship with job performance characteristics. Neuroticism, which is the opposite of emotional stability, has a negative relationship with job performance and is associated with avoidant coping behaviors, which are behaviors that people engage in to avoid thinking about or dealing with stressors (Searle & Parker, 2013). Neuroticism has mixed results concerning its impact on job crafting (Rudolph et al., 2017), although behaviors associated with neuroticism, such as anxiety and frustration, could potentially conflict with some traits of people who job craft, such as proactive personality and self-efficacy (Rudolph et al., 2017). Because the idea of job crafting is to shape existing roles within an organization to increase satisfaction, people who express more neuroticism are more likely to avoid opportunities to craft or constrict their existing tasks and relationships because they perceive changes as hindrances or threats to their existing job structure (Searle & Parker, 2013).

### **Affect**

The second aspect that impacts job crafting that this research will be looking into is the personality trait of individual affectivity. Affectivity is the disposition one has and the extent to which someone experiences positive or negative moods (Brief & Weiss, 2002). An individual's disposition, and, therefore, his or her affect, is unique to the individual and can influence how an individual interacts in a workspace. For example, a workplace with a heavy concentration of highly positive affective individuals would be filled with energetic and confident people, whereas a workplace with a concentration of negative affect individuals would be filled with

nervous and angry people (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). Affect can play a part in how employees make decisions and how they complete jobs.

There is a significant link between affect and employee outcomes such as job satisfaction (Brief, 2002) and office politics (Hochwarter & Treadway, 2003). Positive affect has a direct relationship with job satisfaction, while negative affect has an inverse relationship with job satisfaction (Hochwarter & Treadway, 2003), meaning that those with positive affect are more likely to have job satisfaction. Because one of the motivations behind job crafting can be increasing job satisfaction (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), it is important to understand how other elements influence job satisfaction to gain a holistic view of a person in an environment.

One example of culture and personality jointly shaping employee reactions comes from the study of workplace cultures characterized by office politics. Office politics involve employees using social networks and power to achieve change in an organization (Johnson et al., 2017). The opportunity to participate in and use office politics can vary by organization and depends on an organization's culture. Organizations that place value on adaptability, such as innovative cultures, might be likely to encourage the use of office politics, whereas other organizations that value stability may not (Lee et al., 2016). In regards to affectivity and office politics, it has been found that those with high affectivity have less job satisfaction as office politics increase within the work environment; those persons with low or mean negative affect were not affected by office politics (Hochwarter & Treadway, 2003). This study illustrates how features of both organizational culture and an individual's own personality are likely to impact the degree to which a person purposely alters the social network and relationships around one's job.



In regards to job crafting, those with positive affect are more inclined to participate in crafting activities because of the high positive emotions felt and the confidence that positive affect has attached to it (Rudolph et al., 2017). Positive affect has a strong relationship with proactive behaviors when conducting job tasks (Searle & Parker, 2013). Proactive behaviors are “future-focused, self-starting, and aimed at bringing about change” and have high correlations with positive emotions such as confidence and conviction (Searle & Parker, 2013, p. 8). Proactive behaviors are similar to the behaviors that are expressed when job crafting, namely initiating change and adjusting job requirements to fit with the person (Searle & Parker, 2013). People with proactive behaviors are likely to adjust their jobs and environments to better suit their knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as take initiative to change (Searle & Parker, 2013). Additionally, positive affect has been identified as “a key driver of proactive work behaviors that shape and stretch people’s work roles (Searle & Parker, 2013, p. 11). Although people with positive affect tend to be satisfied with their jobs, this does not exclude them from wanting to increase their satisfaction even more or change aspects of their jobs to expand skills or create a different work dynamic (Hochwarter & Treadway, 2003).

An interesting point with NA and PA to note is that the two elements are not in direct competition with one another; individuals can have both PA and NA in varying degrees independent of one another (Hochwarter & Treadway, 2003). People with high NA, however, may engage in job crafting in a significantly different way than those with high PA. Brief and Weiss (2002) explain that those with high NA “may alienate their co-workers and managers, resulting in more negative interpersonal interactions, thus lowering job satisfaction.” The elements of job crafting, namely relational crafting, would exacerbate those negative interpersonal interactions. An individual with high negative affect would likely have low job

satisfaction yet would not likely engage in job crafting because of his or her abundance of negative emotions compounded with the uncertainty involved in crafting.

## Methods

Before beginning my research, I had to gain approval from the campus's Institutional Review Board (IRB). This involved curating surveys and interview questions that I would later be using to ensure that I would be acting as ethically as possible and cause minimal to no harm to respondents. This required me to scour through sources and previous research to ascertain that I was asking the right questions that would give the most direct answers. I was approved by the IRB with little to no changes required shortly after I submitted the information, and I began to interview and survey people shortly after.

The subjects of this study were recruited by proximity, meaning that most of the people interviewed are close to me, either by work relationships or familial relationships. I found that this form of recruiting was the easiest to manage and maintain. In an endeavor to receive varied data, I asked people of different age groups, job fields, and backgrounds to participate. This would curtail the influence that I might give through the relationships that I have with the participants. A table of the interviewees' type of organization, position, and industry is below.

Table 1: Description of Interviewees

Identification #	Type of Organization	Position	Industry
1	Corporation	Manager	Hospitality Service
2	Restaurant	Server/Bartender	Food Service
3	Higher Education	Director	Educational Services
4	Corporation	Manager	Manufacturing
5	Self-Employed	Self-Employed	Professional Services
6	Corporation	Associate	Professional Services
7	Public Education	Teacher	Educational Services
8	Public Education	Teacher	Educational Services
9	State Government	Manager	Public Sector
10	Non-Profit	Director	Tourism
11	Corporation	Administrative Assistant	Professional Services
12	Private Education	Teacher	Educational Services
13	Corporation	Supervisor	Manufacturing

## **Interviews**

In addition to the surveys, I conducted thirteen in-person, semi-structured interviews with working adults who I felt could give me a wide range of responses about their crafting practices. The interviews were conducted either at the place of business or in the interviewee's homes. The questions relating to job crafting that I asked were derived from the job crafting scale created by Tims, Bakker, & Derks (2011). An example question is "In this role, have you ever purposefully changed who you interact with?" The interviews were evaluated using keyword searches and story analysis to find thematic similarities and find relationships with other variables of interest.

To analyze the organizational culture, I used the CVF framework discussed by Lee et al. (2016). A sample question for organizational culture is "Would you say there is something distinctive about the people in your company?" A complete list of interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

## **Emotional Stability**

The surveys that I used to measure Emotional Stability and PA/NA both came from previous research in the field. The Emotional Stability 10-item scale came from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) (Goldberg, 2019). For this specific scale, I used the Big-Five Factor Markers and asked participants to rate the ten statements on a 5-point system. Examples of the items used to measure emotional stability are "I am easily disturbed," "I often feel blue," "I am relaxed most of the time." Appendix B provides a full list of the items.

## **Affect**

I measured affect using the PANAS-X scale (Watson et al., 1998). This scale is a condensed version of the PANAS scale, asking respondents to choose how often they felt an emotion during the past week, rather than multiple time frames. The frequency of emotions felt determines how strongly respondents have positive and negative affect. I chose to use this survey because of its brevity in the span of emotions. Additionally, choosing a shorter survey for this specific personality characteristic will avoid survey fatigue, which is when respondents drop out or speed through because of too many questions or poor survey design (Davies, 2019), and shorten the overall length of the survey. With this in mind, I kept both portions of the survey as short as possible to keep engagement high. Sample items used to measure affect are listed below, as well as in Appendix B.

Attentive, Excited, Guilty, Inspired, Fearful

Participants were asked to complete the survey before our meeting to reduce the possibility that they would feel pressured to give any socially desirable responses while I was present. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed after the fact for analysis. Please see Appendix B for a full list of all survey questions.

## Results

Using the survey and interview questions described in the Methods section, I found the following results regarding job crafting, organizational culture, emotional stability, and positive and negative affect.

### Job Crafting

I analyzed both task and relational crafting using the interview questions listed in Appendix A. Cognitive crafting, by nature, involves mental processes and perceived meaningfulness of jobs and job tasks. Investigating cognitive crafting would involve a concentrated effort to seeing how employees' views about their jobs change over time or vary by task. Because of the heavy involvement measuring cognitive crafting would take in relation to the other two types of crafting along with the introspective nature of cognitive crafting, cognitive crafting was not assessed.

To measure job crafting, I analyzed the transcriptions for coding words and language that would indicate crafting. I looked for repeated words and themes among all interviews to gain an understanding of general crafting practices. For example, task crafting, which is the changing duties or the scope of a job, was indicated when participants talked about proactively planning their activities to accommodate their schedules or the schedules of who they impact, changing how a process that is critical to their job is done, or otherwise altering aspects of their job to better suit their needs or skills. Relational crafting, which is changing who people interact with within the scope of a job, was indicated when participants spoke about pointedly interacting or not interacting with coworkers who are necessary to their job, creating social relationships with coworkers outside of work for the betterment of working relationships, or utilizing social

networking and relationships to fulfill some professional end goal. Illustrative quotes from the interviews are listed below as strong examples of task crafting and relational crafting.

Table 2: Illustrative Quotes Regarding Crafting Type

Crafting Type	Illustrative Quotes
Task Crafting	<p>“Well, I get to plan what I want to do. I’m not held to anybody else’s standards of what should be done or anything like that. So, I get to have fun all the time. So I will plan activities that I think the kids are going to enjoy, but also will avoid activities that I know are not going to be a positive experience for me ... what I like most is that I get to do what I want to do and what they want to do.”</p> <p>“We have a sheet that lists specific cut duties for each night that says what each person is supposed to do when cut ... it was absolutely silly, and no one liked it ... So when I started closing and my cuts would come up and say ‘Hey, like what do I need to do?’ instead of saying ‘Look at the sheet,’ I’d say, ‘Sweep this section because it makes the most sense.’ ... And it seems like that system is actually kind of been adopted by everyone else when they’re closing. No one uses the sheet anymore.”</p>
Relational Crafting	<p>“I can choose who I want to get that done within reason. So, if I know I don’t want to work with this person because I know they’re lazy or know they won’t get it done, then I won’t choose them ... If I don’t want to talk to a coworker, I just won’t ... I’d say I choose who I work with, but it’s all within reason.”</p> <p>“I tend to interact with people that I enjoy interacting with—similar personalities. People who are genuine and who are nice and who are positive and upbeat. And I tend not to spend too much time with individuals who are negative or gossipy, always negative about coworkers or their work assignment. And then with those individuals, I tend to use more voicemail and emails and texting versus spending more time to walk into somebody’s office.”</p> <p>“I think that that’s an important thing to be aware of in growth is seeing, okay, so maybe where are some of my weaknesses, and can I get myself around somebody that’s going to help me bring them up a little bit higher? ... I purposefully put myself around people that do that for me ... These are people that I don’t necessarily have to interact with, but I do.”</p>



Based on the coding words mentioned above, six of the thirteen participants exhibited task crafting and seven of the thirteen exhibited social crafting. Relationships found among task crafting, relational crafting, and other elements will be discussed later.

## **Organizational Culture**

Of the thirteen people I interviewed, eight worked in the private sector and five worked in the public sector. I categorized which type of organizational culture each company fit into based on how respondents answered and matched it to the CVF discussed earlier. When investigating what type of culture each company is, I analyzed for key words and themes that personify the culture type. For example, team cultures have an internal focus on its employees and a flexible structure in its processes. Participants who spoke about their companies as being supportive, having a “family” dynamic, or being flexible in how their jobs were done (while keeping the same job tasks) demonstrated being part of a team culture. Bureaucratic cultures, those having a formal or controlled structure and internal focus on compliance to regulations, were revealed when participants spoke about safety or compliance being critical to business operations and jobs being static or set in their roles.

Competitive cultures are those cultures that have controlled structures but external focuses on serving their clients and outperforming competition, so companies with this kind of culture would emphasize hard-working employees to be the best in industry and having the bottom line be the customer. This type of culture was indicated when participants spoke about “getting the job done” or serving clients being critical processes. Innovative cultures operate on flexible structures and an external focus on adapting with the market. This type of culture is different from competitive cultures because innovative cultures have a more relaxed structure to

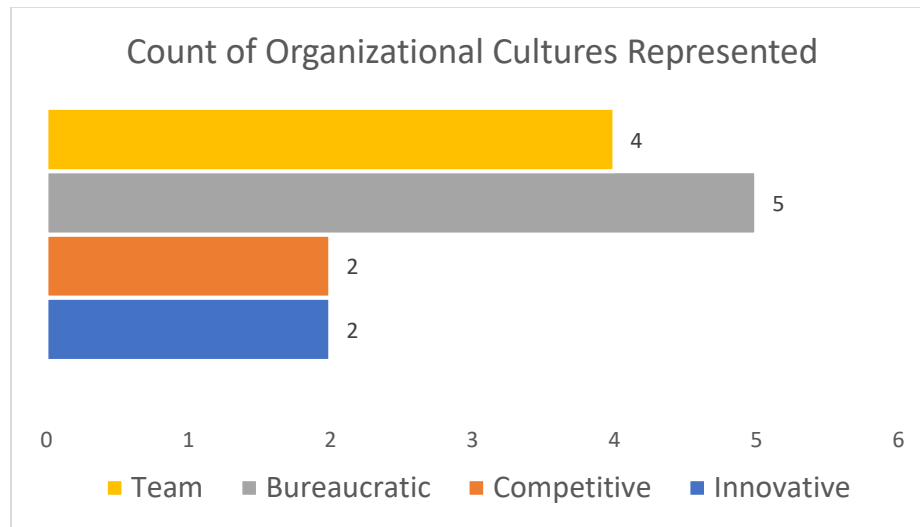
achieve the business objective of growing in an industry. Innovative culture types were indicated when participants talk about employees working to better the company or taking initiative to achieve a business objective.

Table 3 shows illustrative quotes from the interviews describing each type of organizational culture on the framework. Figure 1 shows the count of organizational cultures revealed by the key words and themes described.

Table 3: Illustrative Quotes Regarding Organizational Culture

Organizational Culture Type	Illustrative Quote
Team	<p>“I have a very good team that works well together, is driven to get the job done because we take pride in what we do ... It’s loving and doing, I think, as a whole, everybody’s doing their personal best ... I think our culture is very supportive and everybody wanting to do their own best, but there’s a big culture of helping each other out, jumping in when needed.”</p>
Bureaucratic	<p>“Always promoting safety and trying to put team members first, trying to put them first and let their voices be heard. And then also, there’s always room for growth and moving up in the company no matter what your roots are ... so it’s a very work hard culture, but also they are very sweet and loving people.”</p>
Competitive	<p>“[We] tend to be fairly hard workers ... they understand that for the job we do, if you don’t put a lot of work in, and you don’t take care of your tables, you’re not going to make rent ...just do your job, don’t be stiff as a board, but like do your job...be able to laugh at yourself and with others.”</p>
Innovative	<p>“I’ve never worked at a place in which so many people took such serious ownership of their piece of the pie... it’s constantly working on themselves to become better, to make the company better. Just, they act like they own the company.”</p>

Figure 1: Count of Organizational Cultures Represented

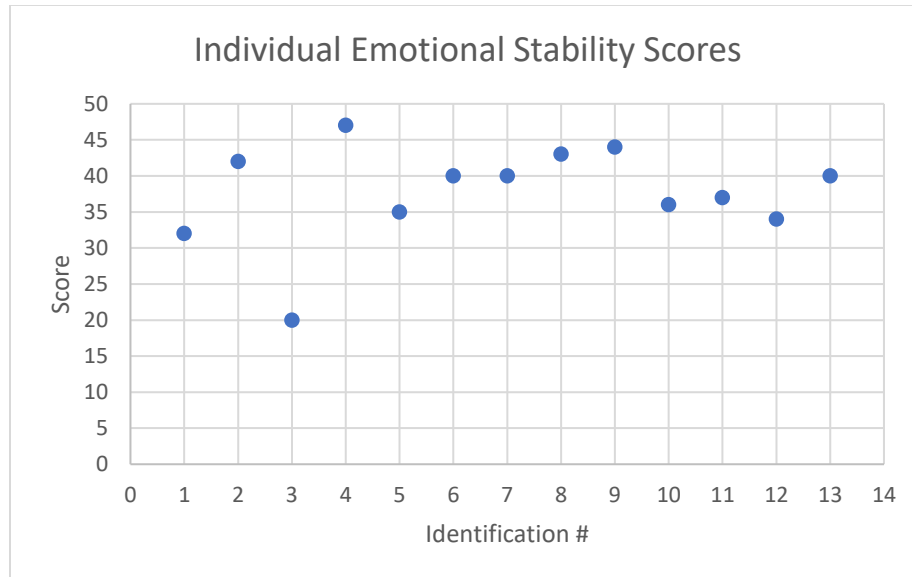


Four of the thirteen companies represented were team cultures, which prioritize internal processes and utilize flexible structures. Five companies were bureaucratic cultures, which value internal processes and stable structures. Two companies represented were competitive cultures, which value external environments and use stable structures. The remaining two companies of the thirteen were classified as innovative cultures, which value external environment and flexibility.

### Emotional Stability

Emotional stability was measured using IPIP's 5-point scale concerning the Big-Five Factor Markers. Participants indicated their level of agreement with 10 statements, which were summed to produce an aggregate score. The mean score from the 13 respondents is 37.7, and the standard deviation is 6.6. Figure 2 shows the individual score received by each respondent.

Figure 2: Individual Emotional Stability Scores

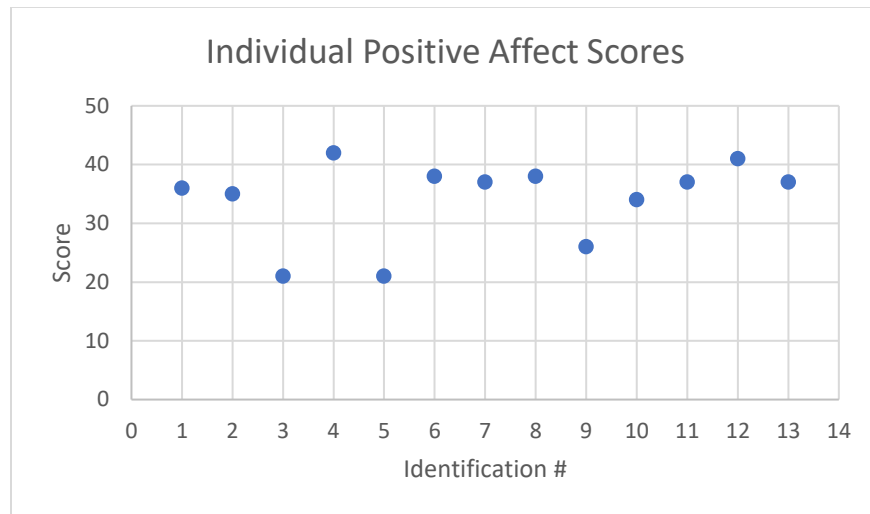


Commonalities found between emotional stability and other elements will be discussed later.

### **Affect**

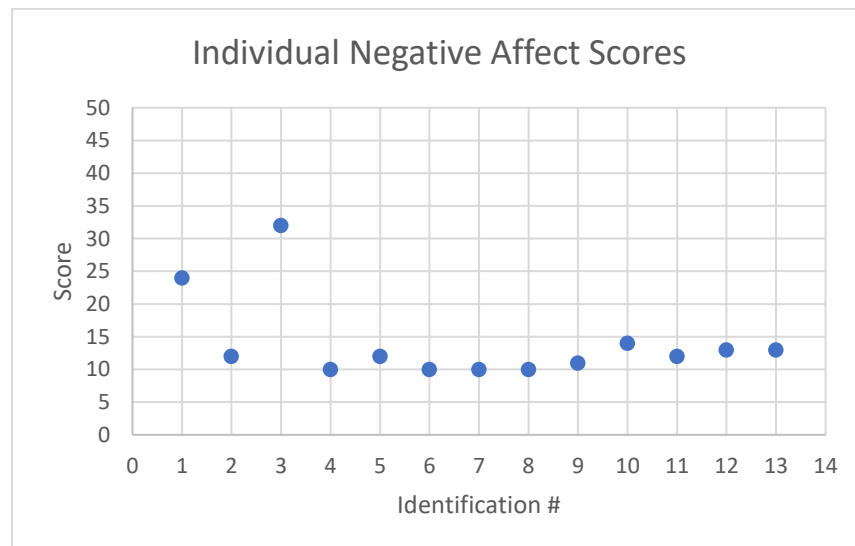
Watson et al.'s PANAS-X was put on a 7-point rating scale asking respondents to choose how they much they had felt a certain emotion from “very slightly or not at all” to “extremely.” Figures 3 and 4 show the individual scores received by each participant for both positive and negative affect.

Figure 3: Individual Positive Affect Scores



The mean score for positive affect is 34.1 and standard deviation is 6.7.

Figure 4: Individual Negative Affect Scores



The mean score for negative affect is 14.1 and the standard deviation is 6.3. Relationships found among affect and other elements will be discussed later.

## **Discussion & Integration**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of organizational culture, affect, and emotional stability on job crafting, specifically task and relational crafting, in an individual. Relationships found from the results of this study are discussed here. On the whole, there was little to no association between public/private companies and type of culture based on CVF, but there were connections between types of culture and other elements researched. Also discussed here are lack of relationships between some elements that were notable, as well as implications for practice, limitations, and directions for future research.

### **Innovative Culture and Crafting**

The results found that there was a relationship between having an innovative organizational culture and displaying both task and relational crafting. Both of the people in an innovative culture engaged in both types of crafting. Innovative cultures are characterized as cultures who value creativity and flexibility, so it would make sense that this type of culture would be ideal for job crafting, where employees can be creative and flexible in how they configure their jobs.

### **Bureaucratic Culture and Crafting**

An interesting relationship found was between bureaucratic organizational cultures and a lack of task crafting. Four of the five persons in a bureaucratic culture did not engage in task crafting. Among the reasons cited for a lack of task crafting in these organizations were organizational inflexibility or heavily regulated job requirements and tasks. This study found that the lack of freedom in bureaucratic cultures, which value rules, regulations, and rigid structures,

stifle task crafting unanimously regardless of individual personality. No significant relationship was found between relational crafting and bureaucratic cultures; in three of five cases, participants did not exhibit signs of relational crafting.

### **Team Culture and Crafting**

Team organizational cultures were found to have a relationship with relational crafting. Two of the four persons in a team culture exhibited signs of relational crafting. Team cultures are known for focusing on its people and using a flexible structure. Acts such as changing social circles or modifying work relationships would be seen as commonplace in this type of loose, people-oriented cultures. Task crafting was not found to have a significant relationship with team cultures.

### **Competitive Culture and Crafting**

There was no significant relationship found between people in competitive cultures and either task or relational crafting practices; the two people in a competitive culture were evenly split on exhibiting and not exhibiting task and relational crafting. Competitive cultures, known for emphasizing hard work and serving clients, would utilize their rigid structures to get the job done. Because of the controlled structure employed by these companies, there may not be a perceived opportunity to task or relational craft. This finding was unexpected since competitive cultures seem likely to encourage crafting in order to adapt to industry changes and to make the company the best in industry. The results from this study show no conclusive relationship between crafting and competitive organizational cultures.



### **Emotional Stability and Crafting**

A relationship was found between higher levels of emotional stability and relational crafting. Five of the seven participants who scored above the emotional stability mean value were found to express signs of relational crafting. Relational crafting, which involves navigating and curating social networks, can be a daunting challenge to participate in if an employee has a lower level of emotional stability (experiences negative emotions such as anxiety, worry, and nervousness). In this study, participants who were above the mean were interpreted to be high in emotional stability relative to the other participants. A possible reasoning for the relationship between higher levels of emotional stability and relational crafting could be that higher levels of emotional stability are linked with tolerance of stress, and curating relationships and social networks within a job can be stressful. People with higher levels of emotional stability would be able to handle the stress better than those with lower levels of emotional stability, and therefore participate more in relational crafting.

No relationship was found between emotional stability and task crafting, which was interesting. The same reasoning for the link between emotional stability and relational crafting was thought to be transferable to task crafting, but the participants were evenly split between engaging and not engaging in task crafting, regardless of where they scored on emotional stability.

### **Positive Affect and Crafting**

Having a high level of positive affect has implications for task and relational crafting. This study found that seven of the nine participants with levels of positive affect above the mean score of 34 engaged in task crafting, relational crafting, or both, regardless of what organizational culture the individuals work in or individual emotional stability. A possible reasoning for this relationship could be that a common trait associated with positive affect is confidence, and one must have confidence to proactively change job tasks and social networks.

### **Negative Affect and Crafting**

A relationship was found between negative affect and relational crafting. Of the thirteen total participants, six of those that scored below the mean engage in relational crafting. This is not a surprising discovery in that higher levels of negative affect have connections with low job satisfaction and behaviors that are counterintuitive to curating social relationships. The lower score of negative affect means that those participants self-reportedly don't express the traits associated with it (nervousness, irritability...). With this in mind, it is not surprising that people who don't express negative affect traits would engage in relational crafting. There was no relationship found between negative affect and task crafting.

### **Task Crafting and Relational Crafting**

There was a relationship between the two types of crafting that were discussed in this study: task crafting and relational crafting. Of the thirteen participants in this study, three participants exhibited signs of one type of crafting but not the other (e. g. exhibited signs of task crafting but not relational crafting). Five of the thirteen participants exhibited signs of both types of crafting, and five of the thirteen did not exhibit signs of either type. A possible reasoning for this relationship could be that people who feel empowered to do one type of crafting also feel

empowered to participate in other types of crafting. The reverse may also be true: people who do not feel empowered to utilize a type of crafting may feel that way across all types of crafting.

Participant #9 exemplifies this in his response to if he has ever changed how something is done at work:

“Yeah, if I changed anything... our job is really rigid because of laws so we can’t really change a whole lot. I mean, I guess you can try different methods to accomplish something by trying a different tack with a person... But I don’t do that.”

Participant #9 went on to explain how his job was heavily regulated by the government, so he did not feel empowered to make changes in his daily tasks. Additionally, Participant #9 did not partake in any relational crafting, which he cited was due to the people in his company being “set in their ways” and a constricting culture that did not encourage interaction among different branches or departments. Similar responses were found in other participants who exhibited neither task nor relational crafting.

## **Primary Findings**

One primary finding of this study is the relationship between task crafting and relational crafting. The study found that participants who were engaged in one type were likely to engage in the other. The reverse was found to be true as well; participants who did not engage in one type were likely to not engage in the second type. This finding is notable in that the two types of crafting, although involving different aspects of a job, seem to require the same kind of personality characteristics to make employees feel empowered to engage in them. The type of organizational culture was not a factor in this relationship as most participants either engaged in both crafting types or did not engage in either regardless of culture type.

Another primary finding in this study is the relationship between innovative cultures and both task and relational crafting. The study found that those who were in innovative cultures expressed signs of task and relational crafting. This relationship is notable in that cultures who are innovative in nature could have a higher concentration of employees who feel empowered to craft and, therefore, could have more active crafters in their business. This may have implications for how work is accomplished and how employees choose to interact with their coworkers in these types of cultures.

### **Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study have direct implications for employees and managers. The findings suggest that organizational culture can have an impact on how people can choose to do their jobs. Depending on the organizational culture, employees may feel more empowered to engage in job crafting. An organization's culture can limit the amount of freedom an individual has to job craft. Organizational culture might be an important consideration to look into for employees assessing how practical job crafting would be in a company. For example, employees looking for an opportunity to engage in task crafting may not feel empowered to do so in a bureaucratic culture.

Additionally, employees should keep in mind the influence of their own personalities on their proclivity to craft. The findings suggest that positive affect and emotional stability could provide meaningful insights concerning who might engage in task and relational crafting. Employees who recognize where they stand on these traits should take a proactive look at how their traits would aid or hinder job crafting. This is not to say that people with traits that are counterintuitive to job crafting cannot participate in job crafting, but it is critical for individuals

to understand their personalities and how they can influence their workplaces through the use of job crafting to make their own lives easier or positively impact their workplaces.

Finally, this study has found implications for human resource applications, primarily considering employee selection and person-organization fit. The findings suggest that an organization's culture can play a significant part in what kind of employees it has as well as how inclined they may be to engage in job crafting. Companies that are interested in gaining a competitive advantage through their employees should look into how their companies align on the CVF and what that means for the type of employees they could be hiring. For example, innovative cultures may be more inclined to hire people who exhibit signs of job crafting because of their focus on adapting with the market. Employee selection is a critical part of a company's ability to maintain its culture and stay competitive in industry. Ensuring a person-organization fit during employee selection is paramount to cultivating organizational culture.

### **Limitations of This Study and Directions for Future Research**

The main limitation of this study revolves around the small sample size used. Because this study looked at only thirteen employees of various organizations, all results must be considered keeping the smaller size in mind. Using a small number of participants can skew the results significantly if there are any outliers or incorrectly analyzed participants. Additionally, the employees that participated were from all different companies and different positions within their companies, so answers may be inconsistent with studies conducted concerning employees in similar positions across companies. Future research should continue to investigate how job crafting can be influenced by organizational culture and personality characteristics, with a focus

on similar positions across companies or within one department in a company to explore the dynamics of how job crafting impacts and plays off others in one workplace.

In line with the smaller sample size, I used a convenience sample, which means that I knew the people that I was interviewing. Using this type of recruiting was the simplest option for this research, but it may have influenced the results in a significant way. By knowing the participants before interviewing them, I already had a general idea of what they did at their jobs and how they might score on different aspects looked at in this study from previous interactions with them. My knowledge of the interview participants may have unconsciously influenced how I analyzed their results. The participants knew me, so they might have altered their responses in both the interview and survey because they knew I would be looking at their responses.

Because a large portion of the interviews were conducted in the interviewees' homes, I did not see their workplaces. Even in the interviews where I was in the workplace, I was there after hours or when there was low activity in the office. In all interviews, regardless of where they were given, I did not experience more than one person's viewpoint of the company. Because organizational culture is the amalgamation of employee's experiences in a workplace, I could not holistically see any organization's culture; I could only base the CVF classification on one person's perspective of the workplace. Further research would benefit from focusing on a more concrete analysis of organizational culture to accurately determine how organizational culture contributes to job crafting.

Another limitation of this study concerns the analysis of the study. I analyzed the interviews and survey data as objectively as I could, but there may be some subjectivity in the results due to user error or unconscious bias. Because I used a convenience sample and had prior knowledge of interviewees, it is possible that my projection of the interviewees interfered with

the analysis of their responses. The interviews were evaluated using keyword searches and story analysis to find thematic similarities. Similar to how an organization's culture was only evaluated through one individual's viewpoint, interviewee responses were taken at face value and assessed. Participants could have forgotten experiences where they crafted or not answer questions as completely as their experience would entail. Future research should look into group evaluations of crafting on an individual level to eliminate any unconscious omission of experiences.

### **Final Comments**

Job crafting can be an influential way to change parts of one's job to better suit the individual's or the business's needs. Companies who are forward-thinking would find use in implementing or encouraging job crafting in their workplaces. The relationships found in this study pertain to the organizational culture and personal characteristics that could influence the use of task crafting and relational crafting. This study contributes to the general knowledge surrounding job crafting and its role within people and organizations, also known as the "who" and "where" of job crafting.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my thesis director Dr. Randy Evans for his encouragement and direction throughout this process. I would also like to thank Dr. Andrea Neely for her guidance and support as a committee member. This project would not have been possible without their help, and I greatly appreciate their time, patience, and effort.

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## **Appendix A – Interview Questions**

### Questions about Culture:

Tell me about your company and the people that you work with.

Is there something distinctive about the people you work with?

Do you think your company has a personality? Why or why not?

How would you describe your company's culture?

Can you describe the people that you interact with on a daily basis?

Can you describe the relationship that you have with your boss?

Do you ask your boss for coaching?

Do you seek advice from colleagues?

### Questions about Crafting:

What is your role at work?

Have you ever purposely changed who you interact with at work?

Tell me about your average day at work and your favorite and least favorite parts of it.

If you don't like what you've been assigned to do, how do you go about completing the task?

If you can, tell me about a time when you've changed what you do at work and the result. (ex. A task, process...)

Do you organize your work to interact with certain people?

How do you make work more enjoyable?

## Appendix B – Survey Questions

### PANAS-X Scale

Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past week. Use the following scale to record your answers:

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Attentive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Distressed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jittery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guilty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excited	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hostile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enthusiastic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nervous	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Inspired	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irritable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proud	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determined	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fearful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Active	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ashamed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Positive Affect: Attentive, Interested, Alert, Excited, Enthusiastic, Inspired, Proud, Determined, Strong, Active

Negative Affect: Distressed, Jittery, Guilty, Hostile, Nervous, Irritable, Scared, Upset, Fearful, Ashamed

## Emotional Stability

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am relaxed most of the time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seldom feel blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get stressed out easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I worry about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am easily disturbed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get upset easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I change my mood a lot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have frequent mood swings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get irritated easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often feel blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>